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You should know Jack: A qualitative study of The Jack LaLanne Show (1951--1965)

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YOU SHOULD KNOW JACK: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF
THE JACK LALANNE SHOW (1961-1965)

by

Robert Cochrane

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies

Department of Journalism and Media Studies
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs
The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 2012



THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

We recommend the thesis prepared under our supervision by

Robert Cochrane

entitled

**You Should Know Jack: A Qualitative Study of The Jack Lalanne Show
(1951-1965)**

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies

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May 2012

ABSTRACT

Jack LaLanne hosted the first and longest running fitness program in United States broadcast history from 1951 through 1985. Since LaLanne's rise as a broadcasting celebrity, the health and fitness industry has grown from a small, somewhat-maligned field into a multi-billion dollar per year economy of its own. As LaLanne reached iconic status through his show, his name became synonymous with good health and nutrition, but the messages of his show went far beyond simple exercises. He used religious, patriotic, and biomedical messages to get his points across. In addition, he was a showman who sang to his audience, used props and even had his dog, Happy, perform tricks.

This qualitative study explores how LaLanne achieved his success. By watching 15 full episodes and dozens of other clips and interviews online, as well as reading LaLanne's books, the patterns listed above emerged. I conducted exhaustive research into relevant academic journals, newspaper articles and magazines. This documentary also features an interview with LaLanne's wife, Elaine, his daughter, Yvonne, and several other interviews with academics, and professionals who have studied him and the field of exercise and health.

Through the academic lens in journalism and media studies, this project meets the requirement of intensive research about an opinion leader who used the medium of television to shift and shape culture. Using the documentary form to present this research is additionally relevant as it allows the researcher to present LaLanne in a more appropriately grounded medium than only writing about him. More than just a

biography, the particular method of research employed for this study was prosopography, which, according to scholar Lawrence Stone, is the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives. The method used in this type of study often begins with a set of circumstances and events and then asks relevant questions about birth, death, marriage, family, where one lived, education, wealth, religion, political background and more. The intent is to tie together a newly considered set of information to discover meaning and insight.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are many for this most rigorous exercise. Dr. Dan Stout sat with me through numerous pitch sessions, listening to me foam at the mouth about my various passions. With great patience, he nodded and pointed toward the bits of saliva that might actually add up to a thesis. Dr. Greg Borchard was a masterful organizer, taking the disparate parts I presented, including a non-traditional format, a non-traditional five-member committee, and, frankly a somewhat non-traditional student and bringing them all together. Dr. Gary Larson provided two years of excellent broadcast journalistic guidance, from the time I set foot in Studio G, through the final defense. His understanding of the power of the visual medium as well as technical minutiae that add up to great effect was very much appreciated. Prof. Francisco Menendez was kind enough to take my call, as a student outside of his department, then take me to coffee to discuss all things film. As an advisor for this project, he offered tough, pointed criticism, always backed with the hope that what I created would actually serve me as I went forward. And Dr. Paul Traudt -- he scared me the most. His methods class was the first I took in the Fall of 2010. By the end of the first session, I was quite certain I was the most ignorant (if not stupid) person in the room. By the end of the class, I learned the foundations I would need to not only succeed but excel in this program. I am extremely proud to be graduating with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. My beautiful wife, Annamaria, son, Giuseppe and daughter, Francesca deserve massive amounts of praise and thanks for their patience with me as I often had little to offer after long days of school and work. I know one thing for sure: I couldn't have done this nearly as well without a regular fitness

program and a healthy diet. I am very pleased to have these beliefs validated by my study into the Godfather of Fitness, Jack LaLanne.

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INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
INTRODUCTION

We see a darkened curtain with a silhouetted, animated, muscular figure standing on the lower right edge of the frame next to a rope, which descends from the top of the frame. Robert Cochrane, author, director and narrator, speaks:

ROBERT (V.O.)

You know Jack LaLanne. He's the "Godfather of Fitness". He had the first national exercise show on television starting back in 1959. To this day, he holds the record for the longest run of a fitness show on the air at 34 years. He was more than a workout expert, he was a pioneer with his messages, challenging conventional beliefs about exercise, nutrition and who should be participating. Over his career, he sold thousands of juicers, vitamins and...made a strong fashion statement. He accomplished Herculean feats of strength and endurance to garner publicity and spread the message that "all of us can be much better than we are". Hollywood celebrities like Bette Davis, Jane Fonda and Arnold Schwarzenegger have all sung his praises. There are some, though, who question the results. Though the exercise and fitness field has grown from an after thought at the time LaLanne's show went on the air into a multi-billion dollar a year industry, obesity rates have also climbed steadily. Profitable as the business has become, its historical image, tied in with wellness, is one laden with hucksters and snake-oil salesmen. There are other critics, too, who say that LaLanne's messages inappropriately favored body over intellect and have had a crippling shaming effect, perhaps even adding to the obesity crisis.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In the following documentary, we'll look at how he communicated, who was he targeting and what effect he had on business, politics and religion. Regardless of the varying opinions, there's no doubt LaLanne was a trailblazer in his use of the relatively new and very powerful medium of television. The truth is "You Should Know Jack".

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
HISTORY OF
FITNESS

ROBERT (V.O.)

Before humans discovered farming or any recognizable form of society as we know it today, we were a nomadic species of hunters and gatherers. People were very fit, but due to the harsh lifestyle, life expectancy was short. When humans began to settle, more permanent homes and societies were developed. The life was still extremely physical. As groups settled and boundaries and borders were drawn, culture developed. As a relatively more sedentary lifestyle became possible, Yoga and Cong Fu emerged in India and China, respectively. Attaching to fitness and the body to the spirit and all that means was born. Yoga and Cong Fu are two of the earliest forms of exercise known to historians. However, fitness really took off, like most inventions do, when a purpose was attached to it -- in this case, war. While the Spartans developed one of the most feared military cultures known to man, Athenian doctors and philosophers Herdicus, Hippocrates and Galen, whose ideas are still revered today, pushed the mind-body relationship in terms of health. The Romans came, they saw and when the fell, they fell hard.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Excess on many levels, materialism and lack of physical well-being, are among the suspected causes. Through the dark and middle ages, intellectualism and culturalism fell and physicality once again became dominant. Not until the Renaissance is there a noticeable return to the idea of the mind-body-spirit connection from multiple disciplines. Philosophers, religious leaders and physical educators of the time all championed the idea that fitness levels enhanced intellectual learning.

JOHN LOCKE (V.O.)

A sound mind in a sound body, is a short, but full description of a happy state in this World: he that has these two, has little more to wish for; and he that wants either of them, will be little the better for anything else.

JOHN COMENIUS (V.O.)

A tree must also transpire, and needs to be copiously refreshed by wind, rain, and frost; otherwise it easily falls into bad condition, and becomes barren. In the same way the human body needs movement, excitement, and exercise, and in daily life these must be supplied, either artificially or naturally.

ROBERT (V.O.)

In America's early years, fitness was deemed unnecessary as, once again, the culture found its physical activity in daily survival. Hunting, gathering, building, farming and many other chores were very physical and demanded human activity. By the time the founding fathers arrived leaders such as Benjamin Franklin (a member of the swimming hall of fame) and Thomas Jefferson were avid fitness advocates.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (V.O.)

No gains without pains. Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (V.O.)

Not less than two hours a day should be devoted to exercise, and the weather shall be little regarded. If the body is feeble, the mind will not be strong.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Out of the civil war comes the Industrial Revolution, which changes how we use our bodies permanently. Mechanical technologies arrive. Urban life thrives -- generally requiring less physical activity than "life on the farm". The cost for this technology and lifestyle? Americans life expectancy is increasing, but so are their illnesses -- some rarely seen before. Cardiovascular diseases, cancer, type two diabetes -- things never before prevalent are now the leading cause of death. Some Protestant groups in the late 1800's worried about the urbanization of men causing them to become more effeminate as manual labor began to decline. Christian Guilds were formed based on the "Manliness of Christ." Members were selected based on their Christianity first, then for an act of physical courage or prowess. President Teddy Roosevelt, born a sickly child suffering from asthma and poor eyesight, extols the values of physical activity with his speech, "The Strenuous Life".

TEDDY ROOSEVELT (V.O.)

A life of slothful ease, a life of that peace which springs merely from lack either of desire or of power to strive after great things, is as little worthy of a nation as of an individual.

(MORE)

TEDDY ROOSEVELT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I ask only that what every self-respecting American demands from himself and from his sons shall be demanded of the American nation as a whole.

ROBERT (V.O.)

New ideas about physical education were developed and implemented in the early 1900's by physicians such as Luther Gulick and R. Tate MacKenzie. Among other accomplishments, Gulick is credited with mentoring James Naismith in the development of the game of basketball. MacKenzie fought for the acceptance and balance of the relationship between physical and academic education. In 1914, World War One begins. Also in 1914, Jack LaLanne is born -- more on him in a moment. After the war, statistics show that one in three drafted individuals was unfit for combat. Government legislation for fitness in schools is implemented. The American Federation of labor and other conservative interest groups testify against federally backed exercise as they fear its fascist, socialist appearance. Congress pushed forward. Several Congressman were pictured exercising in Hygeia, the American Medical Association-backed magazine. Outside the school yard, fitness took a backseat to the good times of the Roaring 20's. And it stayed there during the bad times of the Great Depression. Once again, it is clear that fitness, without stark individual or collective purpose, is deemed unimportant.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
EPIPHANY

ROBERT (V.O.)

In the late 1920's, Jack LaLanne was a sickly teenager who suffered from debilitating headaches.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He claims to have had a 105 degree temperature for 14 days. He was expected to die. He tried to kill his older brother on two separate occasions, once with an axe, once with a butcher knife. According to LaLanne, the massive amounts of sugar and junk food he was eating was making his mind "psychotic". His mother, who raised him a Seventh-day Adventist, took Jack to a health seminar by Paul Bragg.

ELAINE (V.O.)
They got there a little late. There wasn't any seats -- Paul Bragg says, "lady with the little boy...usher, bring two seats and put them up here on stage." And Jack was just mortified.

ROBERT (V.O.)
But as Paul began to talk, the message clicked with Jack.

ELAINE (V.O.)
I don't care what your physical condition is you can be born again. And that hit him.

ROBERT (V.O.)
When Jack told Paul his diet was filled of pies, cakes and ice cream, Paul told Jack that he was a human garbage can. That night, Jack went home and prayed for "the will power and intestinal fortitude to refrain from eating wrong, lifeless, dead foods when the urge comes over me. And", LaLanne added, "God, please give me the strength to exercise when I don't feel like it".

FADE OUT/IN

INT. STUDIO - DAY

ROBERT (V.O.)
However it happened, LaLanne turned his life around. He became a star athlete in football, baseball, track and wrestling.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

He earned the nickname "the raisin kid" for his obsession with eating raisins and nuts. In 1936, a now-healthy Jack LaLanne strives to make a difference: He opens the first public gym on the west coast, in Oakland, California. He recruits local high school students who appear to be struggling in the same manner he once did. But the road wasn't easy. Critics in the newspapers told people to stay away - that men would have heart attacks and women would end up hideously muscle-bound. And worse: "They said you wouldn't be able to sleep if you worked out with me. They said I'd kill you. They said you wouldn't be able to get an erection. They wrote in the newspapers that you'd get hemorrhoids if you came to my gym. That was a big one--they all brought up the damned hemorrhoids."

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
FITNESS AND THE
MEDIA (PRE-
TELEVISION)

ROBERT (V.O.)

For all the credit given to Jack LaLanne as the "Godfather of Fitness" he was not the first to offer health and fitness messages via media. Early pioneers of fitness included Bernar MacFadden, editor of Physical Culture Magazine. MacFadden advocated wearing fewer clothes, avoiding white bread and performing head stands to reduce baldness -- he claimed this to be effective for men and women. Charles Atlas may be the "Godfather of before and after". His story of going from a 97-pound-weakling to buffed beefcake was the stuff of legend.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
MacFadden, himself, awarded Atlas the title of "The World's Most Handsome Man". Atlas' program of dynamic tension promised to make new men out of those who followed in just seven days. As the ads were often in the back of comic books boys were the obvious target -- but not the only responders. Women, King George the sixth and even Mahatma Ghandi all sought advice from Atlas. Clearly he tapped into something the public wanted: Confidence. Self-esteem. Power. There were critics though -- not just of Atlas, but of the entire emerging fitness and wellness industry and its use of print media and radio. In Ruth Brindze's 1937 radio expose, "Not to Be Broadcast", the author took on the practices of those she felt were exploiting the medium against the public's interest.

BRINDZE

There is no question but that the radio has given the medicine man's business a tremendous boost, and that the buying public, for whom the shows are put on, has been cheated both because of the exaggerated claims for the products and their exorbitant price. ... The advertiser is the one who directly supplies the income [to the radio stations] and his interests take precedence over those of the public.

ROBERT (V.O.)
Many writers, some of whom were Doctors, writing in magazines like Hygeia, referred to the "imbecility of exercise", calling those who dared to exercise beyond their college years as "blockheads" and "vain donkeys". Some said it was "silly, non-essential work [that] renders people too tired for mental work".

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And if narcissism or the threat of ridicule weren't enough to drive people away, biomedical brought in the big guns: "Men over 35 who exercised [are] vain fools who should 'act their age and face the possibility of heart attacks".

DR. RUSSELL PATE

LaLanne came along at a time when the medical community was still seeing exercise as risky. I think that impression has changed dramatically in fifty years and people like LaLanne was instrumental in getting that message out.

DR. COOPER

When I was in med school back in the 50's - people were told they shouldn't exercise vigorously. You might kill yourself exercising. Also back in those days we were taught no exercise physiology. No nutrition in medical school. It was all disease treatment. Too much care too late as far as I'm concerned.

ROBERT (V.O)

The age of forty, for whatever reason, was deemed the cutoff by most. Doctor Peter Steincrohn wrote several articles admonishing people for even considering it. "...if you must exercise, at least be reasonably certain that you are healthy enough to undergo its rigors. And remember that the fact that you feel well is no proof that you are well...a healthy 40-year-old heart can become a sick heart when asked to carry a 20-year-old's burden". And, once again, invoking the great power of death: "...the grim reaper seems to have patience for the relaxers and is impatient with the overdoers."

JAMES

Jack had a pure spirit. He was trying to inspire people with the truth. And he did inspire people.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

Before him no fitness gurus.
Doctors said weights are bad for
you.

ROBERT (V.O.)

While some media messages were at
least conciliatory toward the
prospect of men exercising -- at
least until they were 40 -- the
message for women was hegemonic.

ARTIE MCGOVERN (V.O.)

[For women] too active
participation in strenuous sports
will often cause irreparable harm.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Ladies performing athletically may
well become lumpy and unattractive.

MALE VOICE 2 (V.O.)

Because of the formation of the
female pelvis and their ability to
reproduce, the position of their
thigh bones make them physically
unfitted to prowess in certain
activities for which boys are
admirably constructed.

DR. COOPER

I remember in 1972, when the
Aerobics book came out, and being
asked: Is it ladylike for a woman
to sweat? They actually asked that
question. Back when Kathy
Schweitzer tried to run the Boston
Marathon years ago they pulled her
out because only men could run
marathons. To answer your question
in a roundabout way, the attitude
about conditioning and training
back in the 50's is totally
opposite of today.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
FITNESS MEETS
TELEVISION

ROBERT (V.O.)

Exiting World War II, television
exploded in America.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

From 1945 to 1950 the number of television sets in American homes grew from less than ten thousand to six million. By 1960 there were ten times more. The effects of the new medium were (and continue to be) the source of much debate. The use of television in presidential debates, coverage of war and televangelism has been credited with changing the course of history. So what would the effect of exercise on television be, in 1951, when Jack began sharing his messages to audiences across this relatively new medium?

MARC STERN

At a time when fitness was nowhere - where you had weird people (so perceived) doing bodybuilding (weird and suspect) Jack LaLanne made trying to be fit for a population that was almost housebound in our culture -- a viable option. Something that could be considered.

ELAINE (V.O.)

He was completely different. In those days, you know, the movies made muscle-bound types appear like they were not so much upstairs, you know? I wasn't interested in his brawn, I was interested in his brain because he was so smart. He knew what he was talking about and he walked the talk.

JACK

Look, students, before we get started with our trimnastics I want to ask you a question: What is the most important commodity you have in your life? What is it? Is it money? Is it your house? What is it? You know what it is? Time. That's right, time is the most important commodity you have. Whatever you are, whatever you hope to be it's what you have done with time.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Now if you're going to improve yourself and you're going to make this body of yours over -- when are you going to do it? Yesterday? Tomorrow? Christmas? When are you going to do it? There's only one time to start improving yourself and there's only one time in your life and you know when it is? Right here -- I'll show you when it is. This is the most important time of your life: NOW. N-O-W. This can make your life or break it.

YVONNE

My father was in the right place and the right time in terms of media. to use the medium of the television. He had that brilliant gift, as you've seen from the show of looking right into the camera and right into the viewers heart and living room. And it was an immediacy that that media needed at the time. And women all over America thought he could see them because he'd say "Okay, Marge get off the couch!" And across the country Marges would go (gasp) "Ooh! How did he know I was sitting down?"

JACK

Come on, Maggie! Get those old heels up! That's it! 1, 2, 3, 4!

MARC STERN

The fact that he has them using -- you know, you roll up this towel you take this chair. Everybody has a chair -- whether you're rich or poor. Everybody has a chair. Everybody has a table. Everybody has a towel. We're not talking about exotic equipment. You don't have to be wealthy to do these things. And he's treating people with...you can do this. You can do this at home. I expect you to be doing this at home. I don't expect that you will do this in other places. You can do this privately.

(MORE)

MARC STERN (CONT'D)

It's a different moment and it's easily given to them through the TV. And personalizing it through the TV.

ROBERT(V.O.)

As he was on in the morning, he knew his audience was predominantly housewives and children. He used the presence of his dog, Happy, to hook the children and assist in getting his audience to the television.

JACK

Boys and girls, here's Happy. He's been waiting for you. Haven't you Happy? And if you run and get mother, I'm going to show you a trick that Happy has learned recently. So you go get mother and you say, "Mother! Jack LaLanne is waiting." Come on. Go get her. Hup! Alright for all you boys and girls, you always write in a lot of cards and letters you always want to see him do a trick. Well we're going to see if we can get him to do dead dog. Hap! Down. Dead dog.

Happy complies...somewhat.

JACK (CONT'D)

Poor little dead dog with his eyes open. Okay, Hap. Bye bye.

Happy runs off.

JACK (CONT'D)

He's just too healthy to be dead.

ROBERT (V.O.)

He began with a local show in San Francisco on KGO TV, the ABC affiliate. Eight years later he went national, moving his show to Hollywood. Though he had an outline, the show was largely made up on the spot.

ELAINE (V.O.)

He got up there and he had exercises for all parts of the body. He had a pep talk --

JACK

When people start to get around 25 or 30, they kind of start to get along in years. When they get around 40 - boy that's middle age. 50, 60 -- oh, they're old people. And 70 - whoa boy, they're in a rocking chair.

ELAINE (V.O.)

Those pep talks saved a lot of peoples lives. And he had a nutrition. He had a format. We'll open with this. We'll close with this nutrition tip. But all the exercises came right out of his head.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Like many products and businesses however, it took the stars to align for Jack's messages to be heard by the widest audience.

ELAINE (V.O.)

Bette Davis is on the line and she says she's leaving town tonight and says she wants to meet Jack LaLanne. And so we go over to the hotel, she told us, she said: I had a bad back and the doctors didn't know what to do with me. And I was watching your TV show and you were so inspiring and encouraging. I started doing a few little exercises. Every day I started working out a little more and a little more. You always say, 'Make haste slowly'. I made haste slowly and I felt my back.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Original Hollywood gossip writer, Louella Parsons asked Davis what was the secret of her renewed energy and fresh beauty. Davis said Jack's exercises helped her feel like a new person. She was one of several stars who went on to blurb his book.

BETTE DAVIS (V.O.)
...if you want to regain the figure
you once had, follow the advice
Jack LaLanne gives you in his book.
I know, I did it!

ROBERT (V.O.)
Though Jack rubbed elbows with some
of the biggest and best of his
time, Elaine says he didn't want to
get too close.

ELAINE (V.O.)
He never thought he was a
celebrity. He said, you know what a
celebrity is? A guy trying to find
a job.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
POLITICAL

ROBERT (V.O.)
In 1954, Dr. Hans Kraus and Ms.
Bonnie Prudden published the
article "Muscular Fitness and
Health" in the Journal of the
American Association for Health,
Physical Education and Recreation.
The findings of the article and the
strong reaction from President
Eisenhower were presented in the
1955 Sports Illustrated article,
"The Report that Shocked the
President". Kraus and Prudden said
Americans were becoming soft due to
the effortless new lifestyle we
were being afforded. With muscle
tone dissipating, Americans would
have to engage in a state of
physical fitness comparable to that
of when they used to walk for
transportation, work on farms and
perform manual labor. And it wasn't
just the adults. Over 50 percent of
American students failed at least
one of the compulsory physical
fitness test components given to
them, while only eight percent of
the European children did the same.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Eisenhower directed VP Richard Nixon to call a meeting to decide what the government must do. Though poised to make a major fitness announcement, Eisenhower's health would have him wait.

EXT. SUNDECK - DAY

TITLE CARD: THE
PRESIDENT: 1ST
PICTURES OF IKE
SINCE HIS
ILLNESS

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Good news of the week comes from Fitzsimmons Hospital in Denver where the President poses for pictures for the first time since his heart attack, September 24th. Ike took his first steps unaided in his hospital room shortly before emerging onto the sun deck to face the cameras. Ike's famous grin flashed out hearty as ever, pictorial evidence of his continual recovery. Front page news for the millions whose prayers speeded the president's recovery. Those five-star pajamas, by the way, are bright red -- a gift of the press corp. Red pajamas and a red-letter day for the first patient.

ROBERT (V.O.)
As Eisenhower improved, the stars came out to support his message.

BUD WILKINSON
The President's Council on youth fitness was created by an executive order from President Eisenhower in 1956. This action alerted the country to the problem we face in the area of physical fitness. The cause is practically self-evident: modern conveniences, our technology, have eliminated the muscular effort in our daily lives.

BOB HOPE

Grandma had to use her biceps to get these jobs done. Today the little woman flips a switch and a machine sweats it out. Yeah, we got it made. As if I have to tell you your narrator was Mrs. Hope's little boy, Robert. And I'm glad to be in here again, pitching for Uncle Sam.

ROBERT (V.O)

The Executive Order specifies one objective: to be a "catalytic agent" concentrating on creating public awareness. A President's Citizens-Advisory Committee on Fitness of American Youth was confirmed. Jack was ready to do his part.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

Jack stands in front of an American flag.

JACK

Look at here. Do you ever stop to think about the American flag and what it stands for? Representing what, the greatest nation on the face of the earth. Do you ever stop to think what went into making this possible? The tremendous thought; the sacrifice, the lives lost, the toil -- the fitness that went into it! When our forefathers were making this flag possible they had this nationalistic feeling. They worked together as a team. No jealousy. Everybody was together to make America great.

ELAINE (V.O.)

The first time I ever heard him lecture, he said: If this nation does not get in the shape mentally and physically we're going to go down the tubes like the Romans!

ROBERT (V.O)

President-Elect, John F. Kennedy wrote the article, "The Soft American" a month before he was inaugurated.

JOHN F. KENNEDY (V.O.)

This should be a matter of concern to us all. A country, really, is as strong as its citizens. And I think that mental and physical health -- mental and physical vigor -- go hand in hand.

JACK

But now that we have too much of everything in this great land of ours...too many things are being done for us, we have become soft -- mentally and physically. So this symbol here of the greatest nation in the world -- first-class nation, first-rate nations -- we are going to be using our place very sudden-like if something isn't done radically to make the people more fit.

DR. RUSSELL PATE

We have the president's council on physical fitness - in no small way because of concerns for national defense. And concerns that American youth were not as fit as they need to be for military service. Jack LaLanne was establishing his career in the heat of the cold war.

JACK

That's why it's of all importance for you and I to set examples, to show people what can be done about physical fitness and to educate everyone you come in contact with about fitness. Tell them what it has done for you, how much better you feel mentally. So we can all get together and make America the great, wonderful nation that our forefathers set out to make it.

MARC STERN

Fitness is a cultural change of gigantic proportion. At one point, Gallup says it was one of the top two or three changes in our culture.

JACK

And who is America? Right here. The two of us. That's what America is. If you get out of condition, I'm out of condition, then America is sick. Let's make it well.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
PRESENTATION

ROBERT (V.O)

Exercise and physical fitness, of course, is what LaLanne is best remembered for. However, it wasn't nearly the whole of his presentation. During his 23-minute broadcasts he included letters from the viewers, positive thought messages and anecdotes, props, and recipes.

JACK

Now I'm going to show you how you can lift one thousand pounds.

JACK (CONT'D)

Well I see all the gang's here. Everybody's here today but -- what's the matter, things look a little fuzzy. Things a little out of focus?

JACK (CONT'D)

Now if I was to ask you if you could lift this you'd say, "Jack, don't be ridiculous. One of the strongest men in the world couldn't lift a thousand pounds."

See what I have here, students, in my hands? A piece of fat.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Now this piece of fat it weighs a little over five pounds.

JACK

By using my head instead of my muscles, I can lift this thousand pounds.

JACK (CONT'D)

Alright. Says, Dear Mr. LaLanne would you recommend jumping rope as a means of exercise to lose weight? I am twenty years old and have been told that it would be good for me. Mrs. HHB from Long Beach, California. Well, Mrs. HHB, jumping rope is a wonderful exercise -- it is, along with proper nutrition, it will aid to get rid of some of those pounds. Because any exercise is good and jumping rope would be fun if you want to get out and do it -- maybe in the backyard. Maybe some of your neighbors would think you're getting childish again, but it is a good exercise.

JACK (CONT'D)

I want to talk about gravity -- what's supporting this fat right now? I'm supporting it with energy. Because if I let this fat go, what happens? Bang! It falls down to the ground, doesn't it? Sure it does. You ever think about this fat? It has no ability to support itself. The only thing that supports you and your body are your tendons and your muscles.

JACK (CONT'D)

Like I told you, in here is 1000 pounds. We have these plates -- they weigh five pounds apiece. Alright, I take this plate, I take another plate. Five pounds, ten pounds...

JACK (CONT'D)

And if you have a lot of fat on your body, this fat has a lot of tendency to fall down, to fight gravity. So if you have too much fat here, what happens? The fat stretches your muscles, stretches the skin out of condition and you have the hangy, flabby, saggy look.

JACK

Even a child could lift that five-pound plate. Am I right? So by keeping this up for a while, not too many times, I will have lifted one thousand pounds and you thought it was impossible.

JACK (CONT'D)

Come on get out of your easy chair, your easy chair, your easy chair. Come on get out of your easy chair, trimnastics time again.

MARC STERN

It was almost like: you can get healthy, and it will help your marriage. It was very sex-positive at a time when sex-positive was not necessarily the image of television. And it was done in a folksy, non-pornographic way. A lot of what passes as video routines now border on the pornographic.

FEMALE (V.O.)

Are you ready? Here is Kai with a warm up.

KAI

Feet apart. Chest lifted. Pulling the arms forward. And...four...stretching the back.

FEMALE EXERCISER

It's nice to see. It must be positive reinforcement for you -- make you feel good.

MARC STERN

Whereas LaLanne's was never that -- it was always: you can do this, your life can be better. And I think that's a very positive kind of thing. Very different. It speaks to these women as housewives, as women who were at home. It was very much in the frame of a "Leave it to Beaver Culture".

DR. RUSSELL PATE

You know, in Jack LaLanne's heyday, if you were a regular, planned exerciser, that was okay, but you were a little fringy. You know, you were kind of the Y-rat that never quite grew up.

YVONNE

When I was a kid he was the local eccentric. He wasn't famous. And in those days, celebrity wasn't such a good thing. Middle class values had it that you didn't call a lot of attention to yourself. Entertainers were a little suspect.

ROBERT (V.O)

One of the more noteworthy ways he made a name for himself and his cause was through physically demanding performances that drew the attention of the media.

YVONNE (V.O.)

He wanted to prove to people that you can get better.

JAMES (V.O.)

His feats that he did -- you know, his one thousand pushups...I think he did a thousand pushups in 23 minutes on his 42nd birthday. The towing rowboats - 70 people in Long Beach Harbor on his 70th birthday.

ELAINE (V.O.)

When he did the 40th swim, people thought they were over the hill. So many people, they get in their mind that when they're 40, 50 or 60 - oh my gosh, I'm over the hill...

JAMES (V.O.)

He's not just preaching, "okay, lift this weight" and do this and do that. I'm not just going to tell you about your swimming stroke, I'm going to show you what I can do because I swim. He was an entertainer.

JACK

Now I want you to meet the girl who has lost all this weight: Martha. Hi, Martha. Now see, here's the result of Martha losing too much weight.

YVONNE (V.O.)

When I was at home in college, he'd get me up in the morning and tell me a joke...if I groaned and went "Oh God, that was horrible", that's the one he'd use on Television.

JACK

You know, speaking about juggling -- did you hear about the business man, he was such a good juggler...he tried to juggle his books and he ended up in jail? Okay!

JACK (CONT'D)

You know something: Do you know the secret of the pyramids -- how the pyramids were built? You know the secret? They have no coffee breaks - - just exercise breaks. Okay.

ROBERT (V.O)

At one point, he even took on some of Hollywood's comedy royalty.

GROUCHO

You're Jack LaLanne?

JACK

I'm Jack LaLanne, Groucho.

GROUCHO

It doesn't seem possible. Particularly because I've never met him. Where are you from, Jack?

JACK

I was born and raised in San Francisco.

GROUCHO

Oh. Were you there during the earthquake?

JACK

I'm not that old, Groucho.

GROUCHO

They had one last week. What did you do in the years before you were in the middle of San Francisco Bay?

JACK

Well, one of the ones you probably heard of was I was the one who swam from Alcatraz Prison to Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco handcuffed.

GROUCHO

Well isn't that the way everyone leaves Alcatraz, handcuffed? What did you achieve by this? Did you get any kind of an award?

JACK

Well, I'm the type of person...I like to see people have hope. And you know the warden at Alcatraz, he conditions the prisoners to tell them it's impossible for them to escape from there so these fellows they have no hope of ever being to escape from there. So I swam from there handcuffed so now they're happy. Maybe they can get a chance to escape. So they're happy and I'm happy.

GROUCHO

The warden must be crazy about you.

JAMES (V.O.)

He never shied away from telling people how much he worked out every day which was, on average, about two hours every day -- even as he got into his nineties. He was still working out two hours a day. And he said, "You want to look like me?"

(MORE)

JAMES (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You to look as amazingly fit as I do? That's what it's got to take." You see diet commercials on TV that say: eat whatever you want or eat as much as you want...I've heard that so many times. Jack said the opposite of that. He said, if it tastes good, spit it out.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
BIOMEDICAL

ROBERT (V.O.)
In order to validate his position as more than another snake oil salesman, pitch man or "vain donkey", LaLanne used his knowledge of the body he gained in becoming a chiropractor.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

JACK
I'll bet you you're like I am: most of the time you just take your old body for granted. You just figure, well, you get up in the morning and have a little breakfast and you eat food throughout the day and you don't get enough exercise. You just figure, well, your body should just work good all the time. You think it's your heritage to have a good body without doing anything about it.

DR. RUSSELL PATE
Scientific evidence is sometimes confusing to people...you've got the finding of the week and sometimes it seems inconsistent with the finding of last week. But, over time, I think that our society really has a lot of respect for scientifically established evidence. And it doesn't surprise me that LaLanne would want to connect his recommendations and really his persona to that.

JACK

We have hidden, lying within this body, the greatest powers imaginable. Talk about your hydrogen bombs, your atom bombs, all the rest of the inventions that man has invented, none of them can even scratch the surface so far as the workings of the body are concerned.

ELAINE (V.O.)

When he was in high school he got a copy of Gray's Anatomy in the ninth grade or tenth grade...he started reading Gray's Anatomy backward and forward and sideways again. He was intrigued with the body when he saw the changes and what the body can do.

Jack goes to his anatomical chart.

JACK

Here we are students -- how do you think these bones are held in place? You see a lot of people walking the streets with bad posture, half-dead because they don't have good muscle tone to hold this skeleton in place. And they don't eat properly so their bones get brittle. What holds these bones together? That's right, muscle. We have these practically 600 muscles in the body.

DENIS

Jack LaLanne, long before there were the studies and the science and the people behind Jack LaLanne saying, "hey, you know he's right -- he's literally the only guy saying you need to keep working out; women you need to get stress on your body.

JACK

The nerves here for the eyes and the ears and the shoulders...the hands and every part of the body.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

When we do these exercises we loosen the spine and keep it flexible we actually stimulate the nerve force that keeps you alive. Follow me?

DENIS

My mom passed away from multiple myeloma. She had a horrible bone cancer. I got to watch my mom wither away. Lack of bone strength, osteoperosis, osteopenia are completely avoidable if women were to workout - were to put stress on the frame. Were to put a load on that muscular skeletal system.

Jack pulls down another chart, this one featuring muscles of the human body.

JACK

The more we exercise these muscles the stronger and the more beautiful they become. And the more enduring they are. Then, you are really in shape. But if you don't work them, what happens? Like right here, the big hip muscles -- you girls have a lot of problems with this. You don't work these big hip muscles what happens? They get weak. They actually die. So instead of holding the muscle up in the position where it should be -- it starts to hang and sag. Then with no circulation, fat accumulates on it. Then you have this tremendous big hanging and sagging problem.

DR. RUSSELL PATE

Our knowledge of what is and isn't appropriate amount, dose of exercise has changed dramatically in the last 50 years...

ROBERT (V.O)

Dr. Meyer Friedman, who brought the concept of the "Type A" personality into the United States culture, was an active critic of exercise.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O) (CONT'D)

In his 1974 best-selling book, he wrote that running was a form of mass suicide, adding that "this miserable post-collegiate athletic travesty has already killed at least scores, possibly hundreds, of Americans." Dr. Kenneth Cooper, author of his own 1968 best-seller, "Aerobics", has heard his share of criticism.

DR. COOPER

The titles in medical newspaper articles said the streets are going to be full of dead joggers if more Americans follow Cooper. That's how the American medical profession thought about exercise.

JACK

Now look at this, students.

He pulls down yet another chart, this one displaying the organs of a human torso.

JACK (CONT'D)

Look at this body -- the wonders of this body. Remember that the foods you put in your mouth goes into your stomach for digestion, then your intestines for assimilation.

DR. RUSSELL PATE

Coronary heart disease patients, you know, in the 50's, went to bed. And stayed there. We learned the hard way that long exposure to bed rest was very deleterious to the body and just really delayed recovery. So now, heart patients are up within a day or two and surgical, orthopedic surgery patients are up that day. And what it says to me is that our bodies are designed to be active.

JACK

This complicated mechanism here? It requires care. But it's still the most rugged, strongest piece of equipment on the face of this earth.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

And if you take care of it, it will last you for years and years and never give you any trouble.

DR. RUSSELL PATE

And we do well with substantial doses of it. Our bodies are designed to be active. We evolved to support a hunter/gatherer lifestyle.

JACK

Here is the only machine in the world that will repair itself provided you give it the right tools. The tools are, number one: proper nutrition, then proper exercise then that machine will repair itself and give you the kind of service that you want. And remember that this body of ours is God's living temple. Let's don't defile it.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
RELIGION

JACK

You know, did you ever stop to think that you are not really one person, but really two? You have a dual personality. As we go through life, we all have good in us, we all have bad in us. Now what you are is going to depend how much of the good comes out versus how much of the bad comes out.

DR. RUSSELL PATE

In a way he was probably ahead of his time in making that linkage because I do see religious organizations today as extremely important channels for health promotion.

JACK

Reminds me of a lot of you students;

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

you have the most prized possession on this earth: You have the wonderful bodies that the good Lord has given you. But many of you of you students that are watching me right now, your bodies are not running. So what good are they?

ELAINE (V.O.)

Do you think man can make a body like this? Do you think man could make a heart like this?" He'd say no. That's the way he was. I can hear him right now. You have a God-given body and you need to take care of that God-given body.

YVONNE

Fitness was his religion. He could have gone the other way.

ELAINE (V.O.)

Norman Vincent Peale said: Jack! You should have been a preacher!

GARY

I think he was. He was a health evangelist. And in many terms and ways, he was every bit that. He used his knowledge. He used his purpose and passion that he had in order to articulate something he believed in deeply. Just like a pastor, a preacher, a rabbi -- call them whatever you want -- is doing; they're sharing their message about God.

DAN

In a way we could look at Jack LaLanne as delivering a moral message on television. The body is a temple. This will not only improve your physical well-being but your mental well-being. Some would say that each show, he did something like a sermon about how to better one's self.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Jack's religious messages, while incorporating Judeo-Christian terminology like "God", "Prayer" and "Good Lord" were devoid of fire and brimstone. Nor did he promise overt miracles. Popular ministers of the 1950's using the medium of television included Billy Graham and Oral Roberts.

BILLY

If you have failed to live as good as Christ, you have come short and are a sinner.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Both found the medium a powerful tool to expand their message outside of the four walls of their churches.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

ORAL ROBERTS HOLDS A BOY (APPROXIMATELY EIGHT YEARS OLD) IN HIS LAP.

ORAL ROBERTS

You've got polio from the waist down and the right side is affected the most. Now Jesus...

DAN

What the televangelist did that was so successful was that they blended the traditional preacher approach of sermon with the common entertainment elements that were so popular.

GARY

Jack was not an ordained minister who was out there teaching about salvation through Jesus Christ, much like the other two were. But Jack was out there teaching about salvation of health.

JACK

This voice said, "Boy what you need is a piece of candy".

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

And you look around and then you go and get your piece of candy and you chew it up and you know in your heart that you shouldn't be having that candy because you have too many extra pounds on you now. And that goes on all through the day. You have a little sliver of cake here and a little bit of this over here. And then in the morning when our little get together comes on, you say to yourself, "Oh, I can't exercise today". And that old devil, or whoever it is, keeps prodding you -- he keeps over in this ear, saying: listen, you can't exercise today. You've got children, you've got too much to do or your too tired today. Forget it today! Cause the old devil knows that if you miss one day it'll be easier to miss another day and before you know it you're out of the habit completely.

Oral appears to pray over the child's leg, crying as he does so.

ORAL ROBERTS

Honey. Oh, he wants down...Honey -- walk on off. OHHH! Glory to God!

GARY

Billy Graham was sharing the good news of faith through Jesus Christ -- that's the way he looks at it, right? Praise God for that. Jack LaLanne was sharing salvation -- faith -- through living a healthier way.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

Jack LaLanne works out.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Jack did not appear to use his position to threaten or frighten audiences with religion, but rather to offer strength and reassurance from a source perceived by many to be larger than himself.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This type of presentation is familiar to many in sociological studies.

DAN

One thing that Weber wrote about was the protestant work ethic, which really goes back to the biblical teaching that faith without works is dead. Weber equated work for one's family as a moral enterprise.

DR. COOPER

Highly disciplined. I'm reminded of what it says in the Bible. Paraphrase Proverbs 13:18: Shame and poverty come to those who are not disciplined. I think Jack and I had the same concept: we owe something. This is a spiritual thing. Our body is a temple of the Lord.

DAN

When we think about Jack LaLanne's appeal, we can harken to Weber's idea about the work ethic and doing something for our body does something for others.

ROBERT (V.O.)

As for Jack, the message was often laid in the familiar and friendly.

JACK

I know you all say your prayers at night. Happy says his prayers, too.

Happy puts his front two paws on the chair, resting his head between them.

JACK (CONT'D)

Amen. Okay. Bye. See? He's a good dog, isn't he?

Jack dismisses Happy. Happy runs off.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Personal examples were important to Jack, as well. He often told stories from his past, incorporating family members along the way.

JACK

You know students it really inspires me every time I'm with my mother, the attitude she has. She never looks back, she always looks forward. And you know this wonderful body she has this is something that she earned herself, because in her middle years she lost her health. She regained it doing what we're doing now -- this proper nutrition and proper exercise. And she's a very religious woman. But she's not the type -- she said, Jack, most people don't know how to pray. They're always asking God for something. But when my mother prays, she thanks the good Lord for giving her the truth, the light, about knowing about proper care of the body. That's what she prays for. She prays for truth -- and don't you think that is the right way to pray. And, as mother has always said, the good Lord can go so far, but you have to do it yourself. If you want a miracle, you have a dilapidated body an old body that's wrapped with aches and pains and you want a new body you just don't say, "Dear God, give me a new body" and then go ahead with your old eating habits and all. But you say "Dear God, give me the intestinal fortitude to do something about it". Then you get your new body. But you have to do it.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
TODAY

ROBERT (V.O.)

Jack LaLanne passed away on Jan. 23, 2011. He died of complications related to a pneumonia. One of Jack's most repeated quips was that he couldn't die -- it would ruin his reputation.

(MORE)

ROBERT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Based on the outpouring of support and admiration for his life in the media that would hardly seem to be true.

CONAN O'BRIEN

Over the weekend we lost an American icon, fitness guru, Jack LaLanne. This man single-handedly invented the fitness industry in this country. He passed away at the age of 96. We wanted to do something for Jack. So right now we're going to honor Jack LaLanne's legacy with a 21 juicer salute!

ROBERT (V.O.)

There was one notable outlier, however, in this crowd. New York Times writer, Frank Bruni penned a column with the title "The Ripped and The Righteous". In it, he criticized LaLanne for helping create a collective culture of guilt for those who don't subscribe to LaLanne's belief systems about working out. More succinctly, Bruni wrote: "In the post-LaLanne landscape, it's not the eyes but the abdominals that are windows to the soul".

YVONNE

I read that at the time and I thought, he's just writing clever prose.

JAMES

There is truth to what he has said. But I think that it's...a culture has been created in terms of those that...people who are outsiders -- those who are not fit.

ROBERT

Bruni cited author and Professor, Mark Greif. Greif is quoted in Bruni's article saying: "There seems to be a whole substitute morality, where your obligation is to go to the gym and not ask why...If you don't, you become a sort of villain of the culture."

YVONNE

It's like saying, why is it worth living if you can't eat Twinkies. If you can't indulge in everything you want to indulge in. It was annoying but I don't think it's very consequential.

DENIS

I read that Frank Bruni article and I thought to myself, "Are you kidding me?" How unbelievably irresponsible. Here was a chance to champion a guy who literally lived every word that he said.

MORGAN

Jack LaLanne took this to a much wider audience. Just to give a personal view here, I grew up in New York City. We're Irish Catholic. And no one was preaching on Sundays about gluttony and sloth. Those were kind of out of the lexicons of sins that anyone was really concerned about.

DENIS

How rare is that? That a guy in the 50's is telling us that processed food is a disaster? That sugars and flours and anything white was a mess. I mean, he was saying it in the 50's and here it is 2012 and people are still kind of going, "Oh really?"

MORGAN

At the same time, I do recall very much that my family felt that Jack LaLanne was very narcissistic. He was too consumed by how his body appeared - than what he did with his body...what his character was. And, in effect, what good acts do you do with what you're given?

ROBERT (V.O)

In his 2004 article, "Against Exercise", Greif rails against the culture of exercise saying, "Men and women seem more ashamed of their own actual bodies in the present environment of biological exposure than in a pre-gym past. An era of exercise has brought more obsession and self-hatred rather than less." Neither Greif nor Bruni responded to multiple requests to be interviewed for this project.

JAMES (V.O.)

The way that fitness is portrayed in the media, I find to be quite toxic.

ROBERT (V.O)

Author Stephen Grisanti's 2002 book takes aim directly at the fitness industry, including several interviews with personal trainers.

ROBERT (V.O - AS GRISANTI) (CONT'D)

Do you love working as a personal trainer?

JOHN (V.O.)

Nope. But it's good money and it beats working for somebody else.

ROBERT (V.O - AS GRISANTI)

Do you prefer to train men or women?

TOM (V.O.)

Whoever has the cash. Money is money...where else you gonna make \$60 an hour?

ROBERT (V.O - AS GRISANTI)

35 billion dollars a year is spent in the fitness industry in America.

MAX (V.O.)

The fitness industry has been poisoned by greed.

DENIS

The fitness industry has failed spectacularly in helping people to understand what it is that they need to do.

MORGAN

We're into a dialogue about obesity that's really into blame and shame. We individualize this condition so that we make the individual totally responsible for their situation.

DENIS

I read that Frank Bruni article and it hit what I run into every day in my gym and my personal training business which is: people trying to pass off personal responsibility for their own health. If a doctor says to you, do this, this and this -- well then do this, this and this!

MORGAN

If you take a look at obesity around the world, it's accelerating in rural India, rural China...and this is the result of some very profound changes in our occupational, physical exertion, in our food supply, and in the exposure we have to this western diet and western style of living.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Jack was aware of the same problems, though far less pronounced at the time, and he addressed them in his show:

INT. STUDIO - DAY

JACK

See here's what we've done here students. The secret is getting more raw vegetables in your diet. See what we've got here: raw celery, raw carrots and raw tomatoes. Next thing is to get more protein in the diet, less calories.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

So we have the low-fat cottage cheese and we have salmon. You know fish is one of the greatest foods on this earth. And you can season this a little bit to your taste with garlic powder or onion powder. And like I say it's so easy to fix, it's so simple -- try it for five days and see if you don't feel and look better. Because here are the live, vital foods. These are the foods that nature intended you to have, students. The foods that are going to help build up this blood stream of yours so this blood can go to every part of your body and help you to be younger and help you feel like a different person. This is nature's way, this is the inexpensive way, the modern, the fast way. Will you please try it and see if it doesn't work.

ROBERT (V.O.)

In a 1995 interview in Outdoor Magazine, an 81 year old LaLanne expressed his frustration with what the fitness industry had become. "Have you seen some of the crap they're selling as exercise equipment now?" LaLane said. "How about that Suzanne Somers? She should have been thrown in jail for selling the piece-of-crap Thigh Master. It just develops a little muscle on the inner thigh. What good is that? And have you seen Tony Little, the guy who screams on TV? He's like an imbecile.

TONY

Butt, hips and calves.

FEMALE

Oh look at your calves. They look great.

TONY

That's because it's Gazelle Freestyle!

ROBERT (V.O.)

In talking about the state of gyms and the prolific policy of signing up many more members than could possibly use the facility, he said "It's like the movies...the artistry is gone from health clubs because of money".

JAMES (V.O.)

The snake oil salesman is alive and well and he's still in the health and fitness business. People don't want to accept reality, because reality is hard. It's tough to consider that if you're going to get in shape and get a high-performance body it's going to take a significant amount of effort and it's not going to come in a pill.

ROBERT (V.O.)

While Grisanti is highly critical of the industry as a whole, he holds LaLanne in high regard. "There are many talented individuals...dedicated to physical fitness who...are outstanding examples of health, but their greed...alters their thinking. There are the exceptions. Mr. Jack LaLanne...is a health and fitness pioneer [who at] 87 years old looks better than the vast majority of the American population. My hat goes off to this man." It is worth noting that Frank Bruni recently announced he has developed gout as a result of his dietary indulgences tied to his work as a food critic. This is on the heels of celebrity chef Paula Deen's announcement that she has diabetes.

DENIS

Talk about a hero: every single day, without fail. And he tried to help as many people as he could. And what a patriot! He actually believed that if we were all more fit, we would be a better country. He believed it to his soul.

YVONNE

All he cared about was getting people to work out. If what he left was encouraging people to do that -- that was fine. Wasn't for own gratification or thinking, oh my gosh, I want to be remembered this way. He would only hope his work would encourage people to get better.

DR. RUSSELL PATE

We've lived our whole lives being educated about the value of exercise and fitness. We don't have any excuse. The generation before us, you could say, well, the people didn't really know that much about it and the educational systems weren't that advanced. And we don't have that excuse. We grew up listening to Jack LaLanne tell us that this was important and good for us. It is going to be interesting to see how this plays out for my generation.

ROBERT (V.O)

And though he lived an extremely prolific 96 years, he wasn't done living when he died.

ELAINE (V.O.)

He always said "I'm still getting started" I said well my God when are you going to start? He had more to do. He believed like this: anything in life is possible and YOU can make it happen.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

TITLE CARD:
DENOUEMONT

Robert enters just as he did in the beginning, with a silhouetted figure of Jack LaLanne in his television exercise studio behind him.

ROBERT (V.O)

In 1951 Jack LaLanne took to the airwaves to combat United States citizens declining fitness, something President Eisenhower himself said was a national crisis. Jack used his medical knowledge, extensive experience in the field and faith in God to present his messages on the medium of television as had never been done before. His legacy, like any celebrity, is mixed based on who you're asking. What cannot be debated is that he had a significant impact upon the culture of television, the growth of the fitness industry and how those two would meet. Jack's personality, just like his physique, was extremely strong. It seems he usually got the last word. Ever the performer, Jack ended every show with the same last words expressed in a song. So it goes:

JACK

(sings)

It's time to leave you. Let's say
goodbye. These precious moments
just seem to fly. Now here's my
wish for you: May the good Lord
bless and keep you, too.

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Degree:
Bachelor of Arts, Radio/TV Journalism, 1992
San Diego State University

Related Training:
Certificate, Professional Program of Screenwriting, 1995
UCLA
Certificate, Final Cut Pro Editor (level one), 2008

Awards & Memberships:
Ned Day Scholarship
Phi Kappa Phi
Golden Key Honor Society
SAG
AFTRA

Filmography:

2005 - Current: "Share the Road" (Bron 'Stine Productions)
Wrote, Produced, Directed and am in post-production with health-related documentary.
Shot video from the seat of my road bicycle riding 100 miles a day from San Diego to
Ocean City, NJ with United Health Care Senior Health Innovations Executive, Gary Earl.
Website: www.sharetheroaddoc.com

2004 - Current: "Boys of Summer" (Bron 'Stine Productions)
Wrote, Produced Directed and starred in award-winning documentary.

Logline: A father (who has Parkinson's Disease) and his son road trip 20,000 miles in two months to see a game at each of the 30 Major League Ballparks on less than a shoestring budget. All proceeds benefit Michael J Fox Foundation.

Website: www.bosmovie.com

Award/Honors:

- *Best Documentary, Riverside Film Festival, 2006
- *Closing Night Selection, Phoenix Film Festival, 2006
- *Opening Night Selection, Mumbai Sports/TV Film Festival, 2006

2003: Stephen King's "Luckey Quarter"(sic) (Bron Stine Productions)

Wrote (adaptation), Directed, Post Production Supervisor

Website: www.bronstineproductions.com

Award:

- *Nevada's Best Filmmaker, Dam Short Film Festival (2005)

2003: Stephen King's "The Gunslinger" (Bron Stine Productions)

Wrote (adaptation), Produced, Directed and Starred in miniDV short.

Award:

- *Grand Prize winner in Simon & Schuster's American Gunslinger Contest.
- *Met Stephen King and shared the film with him in Simon & Schuster's Manhattan office (2004)

Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDqFbiv3Mro>

2001: "the long road home" (Bron Stine Productions)

Wrote, Produced, Directed and Starred in miniDV feature.

Premiered in Park City, UT during Sundance 2002.

Website: www.bronstineproductions.com

Award:

- *Best Feature, New York Independent Film and Video Festival (2003)

2000: "The Playaz Court" (Artisan Entertainment)

Wrote and Starred in Super 16mm feature film. Artisan Entertainment distributed. Played on Black Starz, Pay-Per-View and wide North American DVD distribution.

Website: www.bronstineproductions.com

Award:

- Platinum Best of Show, Aurora Awards (2002)

1997 - 1999: "All or Nothing" (Sugarbed Productions)

Wrote, Co-Produced, Post Production Supervisor and Starred in 35mm feature film.

Principal photography took place over six days (two three-day weekends) in Los Angeles.

Website: www.bronstineproductions.com

Film Festival:

Premiered in London at Raindance Film Festival.

Thesis: You Should Know Jack: A Qualitative Study of The Jack LaLanne Show (1951-1965)

Thesis Committee:

Co-Chair, Dan Stout, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, Greg Borchard, Ph.D.

Committee Member, Gary Larson, Ph.D.

Committee Member, Paul Traudt, Ph.D.

Graduate Faculty Representative, Francisco Menendez, M.F.A.